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REMARKS

The Official Action mailed September 23, 2001, has been received and its contents carefully noted. This response is filed within three months of the mailing date of the Official Action and therefore is believed to be timely without extension of time. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that this response is being timely filed.

The Applicants note with appreciation the consideration of the Information Disclosure Statements filed on March 24, 2000, September 5, 2001, November 30, 2001, July 18, 2002, February 24, 2003, and March 17, 2003. However, the Applicants have not received acknowledgment of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on December 19, 2000. The Official Action indicates that there "doesn't seem to be any paper at all with that date in the IFW images of the file available to the examiner" (page 2, Paper No. 09202004). As a courtesy to the Examiner, the Applicants have attached a copy of the Information Disclosure Statement filed December 19, 2000. It is noted that the Applicants are merely resubmitting the above-referenced Information Disclosure Statement as a courtesy to the Examiner. It is respectfully submitted that the above-referenced Information Disclosure Statement was properly and timely filed on December 19, 2000, and should be accorded their filing date for the purposes of consideration and compliance with 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. If there are any particular references that cannot be located by the Examiner in the application file or in IFW, the Applicants request that such references be identified in a subsequent communication. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner provide an initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449 evidencing consideration of the above-referenced Information Disclosure Statement.

Also, a further Information Disclosure Statement was filed November 30, 2004. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner provide an initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449 evidencing consideration of the above-referenced Information Disclosure Statement.

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of
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of
12/19/2000